

## LOW-COST WAYS TO

# Make Your Community Healthier

### Extremely Easy

- Use the Iowans Fit for Life Walking with a Purpose tool. This resource provides a way to assemble a group and assess the walkability of your neighborhood. Visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/iowansfitforlife](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/iowansfitforlife) and click on “In your community.”
- Conduct a nutrition assessment of your local restaurants, convenience or grocery stores. Share the results with owner/manager(s) so they know people want healthy choices. Tools are available at <http://www.med.upenn.edu/nems/news.shtml>.
- Visit the Iowa Department of Transportation’s Safe Routes to School page for low cost ideas on how to make the routes to school safer in your community. [www.iowadot.gov/saferoutes/projects.html](http://www.iowadot.gov/saferoutes/projects.html)
- Attend low-key influential meetings in your community. Your community structure is influenced every day by the city council and the planning and zoning commission.
- Write a letter to community leaders to request backing for a community environment supportive of physical activity.
- Showcase the areas of town that are walkable and bikeable by holding a community walking and biking event.

### Will get by with a little help from your friends

- Bring the Safe Routes to School Training to your community. This free workshop will provide community ideas for making neighborhoods more walkable, many of which are low cost. Visit [www.iowasaferoutes.org](http://www.iowasaferoutes.org) to sign up.
- Begin a community garden in your neighborhood. Learn more at [www.communitygarden.org](http://www.communitygarden.org).
- Get together with the police department to assess traffic safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Host a walk to school Wednesday: helping children walk to school safely and bringing attention to the issue.



- Use Google maps to map distances in walkable and bikeable areas of town. Distribute the maps through your Chamber of Commerce. Visit [www.maps.google.com](http://www.maps.google.com) to learn more.
- Conduct a nutrition assessment of worksite vending machines. Share the results with worksite administration and/or currently existing organization wellness committee. Visit [www.nems-v.com](http://www.nems-v.com) for a vending machine assessment tool, worksite report card and additional supportive resources.
- Collaborate with local restaurants to offer healthy side dish alternatives at no extra cost.
- Team up with local schools to open their facilities (including hallways) to the public.
- Advocate for changes in city zoning policies so new growth and revitalization plans include walking and biking.
- Work with the local media to showcase nutrition and physical activity opportunities in your community.
- Visit Iowa State University's Campus Community Partnership for Health site, [www.ccph.iastate.edu](http://www.ccph.iastate.edu), to find even more easy ways to make your community healthier.

### May require organizational approach (PTA, Bike Club, Lions, etc.)

- Encourage your community to paint bike lanes on city streets. Paint is cheap! Repaint crosswalks to make them more visible to pedestrians and motorists.
- Start a farmer's market so locally grown produce is convenient and reasonably priced. Place the market in a location that is easily accessible on foot or by bike. Learn more at [www.iafarmersmarkets.org](http://www.iafarmersmarkets.org).
- Design and implement bike racks in areas of town where people could easily bike.



To learn more about low-cost ways to make your community healthier visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/iowansfitforlife](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/iowansfitforlife) or call 1-800-532-1579.